

Information Services Board Briefing Paper on the Washington Windows 2000 Active Directory Deployment Project

Prepared by Tom Parma, DIS/MOSTD, (360) 902-3552.

Description

The Department of Information Services (DIS) will provide a project status update and describe actions undertaken to date for the Washington Windows 2000 Active Directory Deployment Project.

Background

The State of Washington has a unique opportunity to establish a major shared infrastructure resource. Through the use of Microsoft Windows 2000 Active Directory (W2KAD), network associated resources from an agency can be shared by many agencies who participate in a single enterprise view of the network (or in Windows 2000 parlance, a single "forest"). The Washington W2KAD Deployment Project endeavors to build a single statewide forest where agencies can reap the benefits of shared resources as if it were a single enterprise.

The W2KAD project team consists of representatives from various agencies within the Executive branch of State government. A proof of concept project was sponsored by DIS in February 2000 with participation from several agencies. The proof of concept had positive results, and based on those results, a decision was made to begin implementation of a single forest.

Status

To date six agencies have joined the production multi-agency forest: the departments of Social & Health Services, Personnel, Labor & Industries, General Administration, and Information Services as well as the Employment Security Department.

Three agencies are in pre-production (test) plus: the departments of Health and Financial Institutions as well as the Office of Financial Management.

Additional participating agencies are: the departments of Transportation, Retirement Systems, and Ecology as well as the Health Care Authority.

Two projects are underway that will take advantage of the multi-agency forest. The first is project Exchange 2000; a common approach to manage Exchange e-mail as an enterprise-wide e-mail system. The second project is Single Sign-On (SSO). SSO will allow users in agencies that belong to the forest to access statewide applications from a PC located in any other agency that belongs to the forest without having to be authenticated a second time.

A forest welcome kit intended for the internal use of the State of Washington is now available for agencies that are interested in the multi-agency forest. The kit is designed to provide an overview of Windows 2000 forest concepts, history of the project, vision, goals, and the interagency governance structure.

Issues

- Separate forests: agencies that create their own forest will not be able to take advantage of the benefits of the statewide forest. Although there may be legitimate reasons for creating a separate forest, this should be done with great caution. Examples of organizations that have adopted a single forest approach include: the US Air Force, TRW, Wells Fargo, and Lockheed Martin. Microsoft has three forests: Microsoft corporate, MSN, and Hotmail. These were established along specific, separate lines of business with no operational or business requirements to share information or infrastructure.

Recommendation

ISB oversight staff recommends that the ISB continue to receive periodic reports on this project including agencies that have opted to create their own forest.